

Wind Energy Ordinance Development Process For the Town of Union

Temporary Stay. The Town of Union is developing an ordinance to regulate large wind energy systems in the Town. On August 2, 2007, the Town Board adopted a 12-month temporary stay on the construction of wind energy systems to give the Town time to research and develop an appropriate ordinance. A copy of the temporary stay is available on the Town's website and can be obtained from the Town Clerk. The Town Board is looking for Union residents interested in getting involved in this process.

Authority to Regulate Wind Systems. Generally, under Wisconsin law, local governments like the Town of Union may regulate wind energy systems only for the purpose of preserving and protecting public health or safety (Wisconsin Statute section 66.0401). If a local government makes rules about wind energy systems that are not directly related to public health and safety, these rules:

- must not make a wind energy system significantly more expensive or less efficient, or
- must allow for an alternative system of about the same cost and efficiency.

Ordinance Development Process and Citizens' Advisory Commission. The Town Board and Town Plan Commission would like input from Union residents to find out, given the Town's authority, what kind of wind energy regulations are most appropriate for the Town. The Town Plan Commission will hold a public hearing on August 30, 2007, at which it will:

- discuss local regulation of wind energy systems, and
- recommend people to be appointed by the Town Board to a citizens' advisory commission on large wind energy systems.

Over the next 5 months, the citizens' advisory commission will study wind energy systems and make written recommendations to the Town Plan Commission and Town Board on the regulations the Town should adopt.

After receiving these recommendations, the Plan Commission will:

- hold a public hearing,
- consult with legal counsel, who will assist in drafting an ordinance,
- consider the draft ordinance, and
- make final recommendations to the Town Board.

Once these recommendations are made, the Town Board will:

- hold a public meeting, and
- adopt a final ordinance.

Interested in Membership on the Citizens' Advisory Commission? If you are interested in being a member of the citizens' advisory commission, please contact the Town Clerk by phone at 608-882-0285 or email at townofunion@dishmail.net no later than August 28, 2007, and attend the Plan Commission's public hearing on August 30, 2007.